



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development
Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Neb. 68508
(402) 437-5551 (Phone) (402) 437-5093 (TDY) (402) 437-5408 (Fax)

Deborah Drbal, USDA Rural Development (402) 437-5558

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT DOLLARS BOOST COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 15, 2004 – The Nebraska Cooperative Development Center (NCDC) of Lincoln is the recipient of \$299,958 from USDA Rural Development that will assist in providing and enhancing cooperative development services in Nebraska.

NCDC's project will help achieve retention of jobs and farms in rural Nebraska, an area that is suffering severe economic distress and population loss. The project includes the adding of a half time position to be shared with the University of Nebraska's Food Processing Center to meet the demand for services in the food products area related to feasibility studies, product development, marketing analysis and business plans. Additionally, horizontal linkages among cooperative groups will be strengthened; the development of the Certified First Responder Network furthered; education, outreach and capacity building for cooperative development fostered; and the transferability of Nebraska's experiences and best practices to other states enhanced.

The USDA funding was received through the Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program administered through USDA Rural Development. The grants, awarded on a competitive basis, are intended to foster rural cooperative development through projects that provide rural residents with education and technical assistance in areas of cooperative startup, marketing and managing, and other self-help tools.

A complete list of selected recipients can be viewed at USDA Rural Development's website at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. Funding of selected applicants is contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreements.

For additional USDA Rural Development information in Nebraska contact the USDA Rural Development State Office at 402-437-5558, (402) 437-5093 (TDY); Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Neb. 68508.

Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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